

CLAIMS:

1. Optical disc (2) suitable for optically storing information in multiple sessions (51), having a memory chip (60) containing session information stored therein.
2. Optical disc according to claim 1, the disc having at least one track (50) for storing information, a lead-in portion (53) of the track also containing session information recorded therein.
3. Optical disc drive apparatus (1) for reading optical information from an optical disc (2) according to any of claims 1-2, the optical disc drive apparatus being adapted for reading session information from said memory chip (60) and using this information when accessing the optical disc.
4. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 3, comprising:
 - means (4, 6) for receiving and rotating an optical disc;
 - an optical system (30) and an actuator system (40), controlled by a control circuit (90), for scanning tracks (50) of the disc (2) using an optical beam (32) for reading information from said track;
 - a chip reader/writer device (61), coupled to an input/output port (98) of the control circuit (90), adapted for communication with said chip (60) of the disc (2);wherein the control circuit (90) is adapted, in response to a read command, to read session information from said chip (60).
5. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 4, the optical disc drive apparatus being adapted for performing an information reading method comprising the following steps:
 - receiving [step 301] a user instruction to read a specific piece of information;
 - consulting [step 303] the session information in memory chip (60);
 - determining [step 304] the position where the required information is to be

found;

- jumping [step 305] to the location determined in step 304.

6. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the optical disc drive apparatus is adapted, after step 301, to first check [step 302] whether the disc (2) carries a memory chip (60) with session information; and wherein the optical disc drive apparatus is adapted, when the check of step 302 results in the finding that the disc (2) does carry a memory chip (60) with session information, to continue with steps 303, 304, 305.

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7. Optical disc drive apparatus for writing optical information into an optical disc (2) according to any of claims 1-2, the optical disc drive apparatus being capable of reading session information from said memory chip and using this information when accessing the optical disc, the optical disc drive apparatus being adapted to store session information into said memory chip after having performed a write operation.

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8. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 7, comprising:

- means (4, 6) for receiving and rotating an optical disc;
 - an optical system (30) and an actuator system (40), controlled by a control circuit (90), for scanning tracks (50) of the disc (2) using an optical beam (32) for writing information into said track or for reading information from said track;
 - a chip reader/writer device (61), coupled to an input/output port (98) of the control circuit (90), adapted for communication with said chip (60) of the disc (2);
- wherein the control circuit (90) is adapted, in response to a write command, to read session information from said chip (60).

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9. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 8, the optical disc drive apparatus being adapted for performing an information writing method comprising the following steps:

- receiving [step 304] a user instruction to read a specific piece of information;
 - consulting [step 403] the session information in memory chip (60);
- determining [step 404] a free track portion where writing may take place;
- jumping [step 405] to a position at the beginning of the track portion determined in step 404;

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- writing [step 406] the information in a new session;
after having completed the new session, writing [step 407] updated session information into the memory chip 60.
- 5 10. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the optical disc drive apparatus is adapted, after step 401, to first check [step 402] whether the disc (2) carries a memory chip (60) with session information;
and wherein the optical disc drive apparatus is adapted, when the check of step 402 results in the finding that the disc (2) does carry a memory chip (60) with session information, to
10 continue with steps 403-407.
11. Optical disc drive apparatus according to claim 7, capable of performing a random write operation on a recordable optical disc (R-type).
- 15 12. Storage device (2) comprising a relatively slow access storage medium (50) and a relatively fast access storage medium (60) containing format information and/or state information relating to the data stored in said relatively slow access storage medium (50).
- 20 13. Reading apparatus (1) for reading information from said storage device (2), the reading apparatus being adapted for reading information from said relatively fast access storage medium (60) and using this information when accessing the relatively slow access storage medium (50).
- 25 14. Writing apparatus (1) for writing information to said storage device (2), the writing apparatus (1) being adapted for reading information from said relatively fast access storage medium (60) and using this information when accessing the relatively slow access storage medium (50), the writing apparatus (1) being further adapted to store information into said relatively fast access storage medium (60) after having performed a write operation to said relatively slow access storage medium (50).